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Fig. 17. Pangwe Village, Spanish Guinea.

361 and followers who help him with its construction and have a perma-
62 nent right to its use; /58/ /Fig. 18/ hence, the relational prefix
344 a in abā, "meeting house"; hence probably also the Janus head which I saw on the post of a meeting house (cf. Fig. 19). The stem of the word a-bā I derive from ba, "to divide, to share" (1), and I

1. The same stem exists in the numeral two (bai), which is clearly the result of the division of one object.

believe that it was originally intended to designate the place where the game that had been killed was divided. The meeting house is now the place for all public transactions, from the dividing of meat to judicial proceedings, public deliberations, and the reception of strangers.

62 Sometimes the meeting house constructed when the establish-
62 ment was founded remains permanently in a temporary state; it
344 remains unfinished because the people are too lazy -- each one thinks the other should start first -- and the chief lacks the power

/62/

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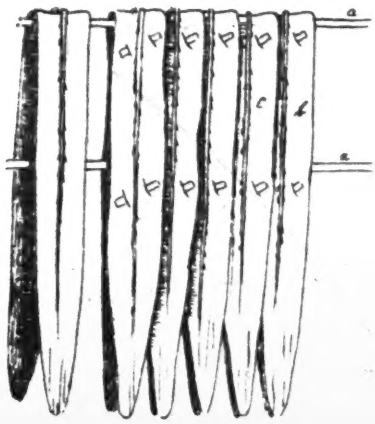

Fig. 22. Piece of a Roofing Mat at the Beginning of its Construction.

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Fig. 23. Small Village in the Settlement of Nssälang (Essáung Family), Spanish Guinea.

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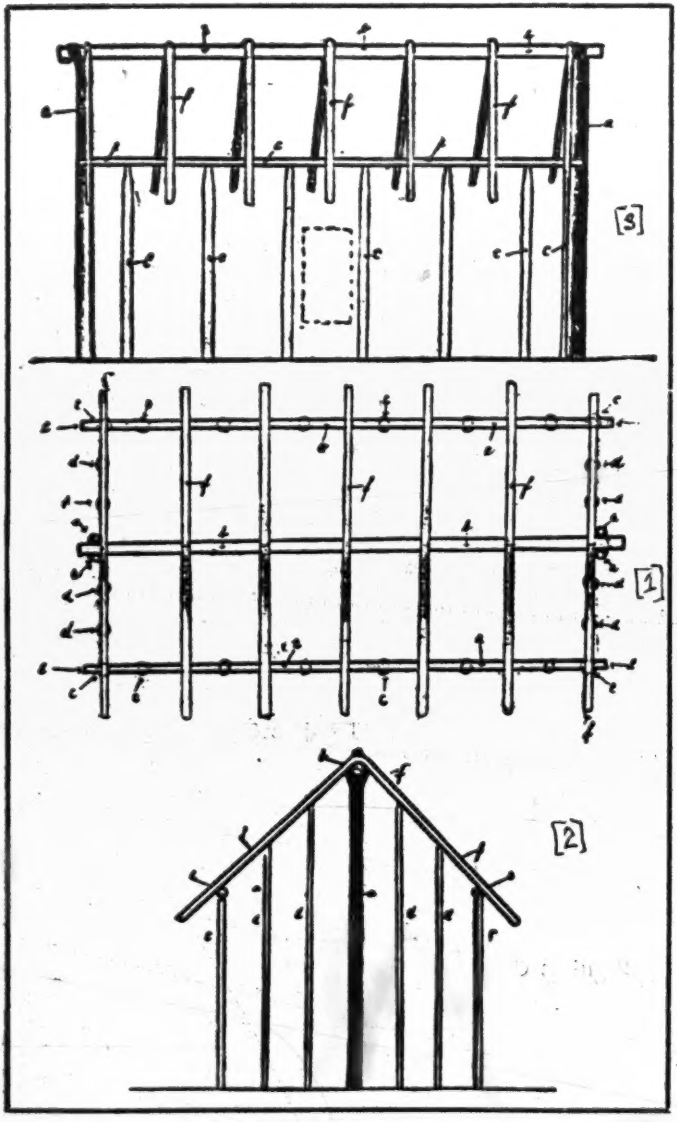

Fig. 24. Frame of a House.
Drawing 1, from above; drawing 2, from the front; drawing 3, from the side.

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[516]

Fig. 34. Dwelling in Makonanâm (Ojek Family), Spanish Guinea.

344 517 538 fire gets too hot for him, and wards off the smoke from his face like a person gently but firmly sending a little child away! He looks as though he is talking to the fire and delivering a speech to the logs. Everybody listens in silence, everybody hangs on his words. And then follows a deliberate pause, after which he begins anew with impressive intonation; and at familiar places all the listeners enter into the narrative with a brief choral song in response to the solo part of the old man. Or there may be a 344 517 521 533 bit of gossip to relate, with a hubbub of biting words, an occasion for spontaneous gaiety to prevail. On yet another occasion a performance by a famous xylophone artist will draw the population to the meeting house. The entire village, women and children included, takes part in these recitals; the children beat out the rhythm with small pieces of wood, while the women, with great dignity, beat together groundnuts and ngon which represent the "fee" and, softly humming a refrain, cast a meaningful glance in the direction of the tireless player.

342 The dwelling (ndă; plural, mandă), Figure 34, like the meeting house, /70/ /Fig. 34 appears here in the original text/ has a gabled roof and a rectangular ground plan. Like meeting houses, dwellings have both temporary and permanent forms.

342 Temporary dwellings are situated in the row of houses with their gables facing the village square, while the permanent ones have their long side turned toward it. A further difference between the two lies in the fact that in the temporary dwellings the door is placed on the gabled side and the walls on the two long sides are built up to a height of only about half a meter in order to save time; the roofs correspondingly extend farther down so that they almost touch the ground. The resultant greater steepness of the roof enables the rain water to drain off more rapidly, and thus makes it possible to save building material since it is not necessary to place the mats so closely on top of one another.

The permanent dwellings always have four complete walls and lack windows. A door, whose threshold is half a meter above the ground, thus giving the impression of a window, is made in the middle of the long wall. Most houses, in fact, have a door which is frequently not much wider than our casements in both the front wall and the opposite back wall. By and large, the construction of the dwelling is like that of the meeting house, except that the number of posts for the front wall is often reduced to four. For this reason, these posts are thicker and conspicuous for their careful workmanship. For the side walls in both the dwelling and the meeting house, not tree bark but swamp palms are used -- more rarely Sarcophrynium leaves or strips of raffia pith -- /71/ /Fig. 35 appears here in the original text/ whenever there is a concern for a more tasteful exterior. Sometimes a covered anteroom is formed in front of the house by propping up the overarching roof with posts along its free edge, as is done in the case of the meeting house.

The section of the front wall between the two central posts, where the door opening has been cut out, is frequently worked with great care; at least a number of short longitudinal strips of raffia will be inserted, especially between the ground and the threshold (Fig. 35). The threshold (mpfá dega I) (1), as well as

1. Stem pfa (fa), "to compress, to wedge."

the lintel in many cases, consists of a raffia stalk split lengthwise down the middle and cut out at both ends in the form of a swallow

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Fig. 35. The Door Part of a Dwelling in Olanga (Essángbuak Family), Southern Cameroons.

tail. This is wedged into the door opening in such a fashion that 342
the walls fit into the notches. Sometimes it is given an attractive form by being flattened near the end and having bands of palm plaited around it. Along the sides, on the other hand, the people content themselves with single strips of raffia stalk as door lining.

In the interior a thick post or a number of thinner posts (andɛ̄'i) stands at both sides of the door opening (mbɛ̄i I) (see Figs. 37 h, 38). Between these posts are wedged one or two diagonally placed poles, by means of which the piece of bark that serves as a door (evĭ'n e nda, evĭ'n e mbɛ̄i = house bark or door bark) is held fast. Sliding doors are more rarely encountered. These run between /72/ the wall and a lath at the top and bottom of the door opening; in the daytime they are pushed to the side and at night pulled in front of the opening. We find door posts even where there are sliding doors, since they primarily serve the purpose of preventing strangers from looking into the hut during the daytime. Most doors made of bark close poorly because they warp. Frequently the "door" consists of nothing /Fig. 36 appears here in the original text/ more than a number of narrow bark pieces that are loosely

1: Tessmann--31 E-5 (1904-1909) 1913 FH9 Fang FH9

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Fig. 36. Door of a Dwelling in Alén (Essáuong Family). Carved out of wood and painted a light gray with clay.

placed next to each other against the opening from the inside, and naturally there are large cracks between them. It goes without saying that any sudden gust of wind will blow them down and that they also fall down by themselves. I myself have often enough been awakened by this unfamiliar clatter, or the cool night air and the stings of the Anopheles mosquitoes swarming in have given me an unpleasant awakening.

[531] Doors made of wood (Fig. 36) are to be found here and there and are sometimes decorated with simple carved patterns. They are placed or wedged against the door opening from the inside. Frame doors imported by foreign traders and [139] set on hinges made of bands of palm are not very popular, generally speaking.

Exactly as in the case of the meeting houses, the construction and condition of the dwellings vary greatly. Some [356] houses are so clean and attractively built that they look like a doll's house just unpacked; others, however, look dilapidated, unclean, and unattractive, and they make such a revolting impression that -- as I often told my Pangwe -- not even a white man's dog would feel at home in it. The majority of the dwellings, of course, are between these two extremes, that is to say, if one takes the average of several villages -- for the houses of a single village are often of just about the same quality, a fact which doubtless stems from their being equally old. There are villages which appear

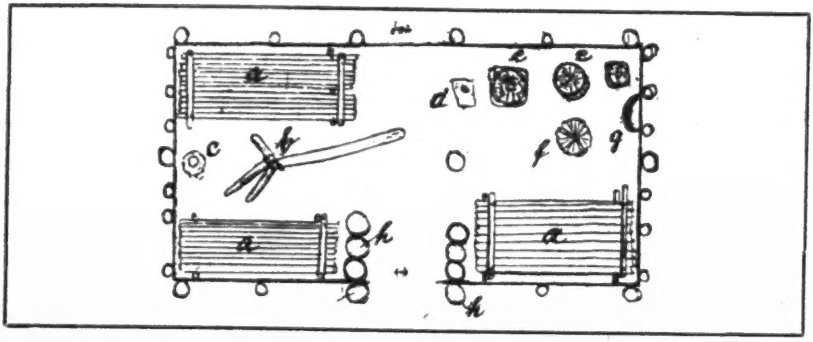

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Fig. 37. Ground Plan of a Pangwe Dwelling.
a, sleeping benches; b, fireplace (kitchen); c, pot with water, d, grindstone; e, baskets; f, bundle of maize cobs; g, hens' nest; h, door posts.

like the toys of a gigantic child that have just been finished by a giant toy dealer and are placed on the clean earth as though on a gigantic table. There are others in which one actually finds not a single house which does not let in the rain in torrents, not a single house whose walls are still standing straight and which does not provide entry for nocturnal reptiles between its walls and the ground. The reader should consider the significance of the name of the village of Ebualebambe ("tumble-down village") which, indeed, as I saw, did full justice to its name. 342 [103]

Whether the houses are carefully built or not, they always look depressed because they are too low in relation to their length, which seems even greater /73/ /Fig. 37 appears here in the original text/ than it actually is because of the way the houses are arranged in rows. One gets the same impression when one goes inside; on the average it is so low that one can stand in it only in a bent position for fear of coming into painful contact with the roof or the household utensils hanging from it. It is rare indeed that one can stand upright on one of the low sleeping benches without bumping his head.

As in the case of the meeting house, the interior of the dwelling (Fig. 37) has a single room which the Pangwe divides into atûm a nkiai and atûm akui, that is to say, into a western "room" (on a lower level) and an eastern "room" (on a higher level) which are to the left and right of the door. Figure 38 gives a view of the interior of a Fang hut. In this illustration one side wall and the right

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Fig. 38. A Dwelling of the Fang.
The right half of the front wall and one side wall have been removed for a view of the interior.

342 half of the front wall have been removed in order to provide a full view.

The four corners or at least three of them are occupied by
342 sleeping benches (Fig. 37 a) which are constructed exactly like
352 the benches of the meeting houses. The distance between the
353 head and foot rest, however, is only about three quarters body length, so it is necessary to lie on them with one's legs drawn up. The sleeping benches extend to the door posts and thus take up most of the room in the house. On one of the narrow sides and
354 between two sleeping benches is the fireplace (Figure 37 b), that is, a few logs placed together and serving both as a hearth and a stove. Over the fireplace is attached a device for drying and storing food and dishes which is put together in the following manner (Fig. 39). A frame covered with plaited raffia strips is laid over the door posts (a) and two forked sticks driven into the corners. This is the "pot loft," akáń e mvé (c); one can usually see a number of pots and a clay water bottle on it. Other things, which even for the Negro cannot be designated as "valuable possessions," /74/ /Fig. 38 appears here in the original text/ are also found there, such as banana bowls, maize spindles, to whose use I shall return later, and so forth. Under the pot loft hangs the drying loft or "ground-nut loft," akáń owŭnŏ (d). As the name indicates, this loft

342 352 353 serves only for the storage of groundnuts and is likewise usually made of plaited raffia strips. Then there is the most important household item for the housewife, the pantry, in the form of a storage box, bū́.bū, or bū.u (e), intended primarily for meat and other delicacies. This box is often very nicely made with raffia pith. In front it usually has a small protruding ledge on which salt, pepper, and spoons may be placed, and thus it serves as a kind of "dumb-waiter"; at the side it has an opening that is closed by means of a sliding door made of pith. The box fills the space between the beds so that it is barely possible to stand there. One or two drying or roasting boards, etǎn (f and g), hang under the box, just above the fire. These boards are used for roasting groundnuts and for drying things.

On the opposite wall at the same level a similar frame is put up, over which drying boards can be placed and from whose front edge the women's long baskets (nkūn I) are hung. There is floor space under this frame, a sleeping bench may be placed there, covered with baskets, grindstones, and other tools, or with the assorted possessions of the head of the household. A person who enters the house for the first time finds himself in the middle of the passage between front and back door, not knowing which way to turn. To make room at all it would be necessary to clear everything out; otherwise a European would find the house uninhabitable. In the north, /75/ especially among the Bulu and in part also among the Ntum, the huts are somewhat more spacious and habitable.

For hanging up baskets, calabashes, satchels, and other objects on the wall, the Pangwe makes use of a natural hook (ekŏ́b), that is, a piece of a tree trunk which is cut out just above and below a branch. The branch is cut off, the remaining stump is cut more or less to a point, and then the whole piece is inserted, in the same position as it was on the tree, between the longitudinal raffia strips on the inner side of the wall. Objects are very readily attached to the wall by means of raffia stalks stuck between the mats, from whose free ends they are suspended.

An important piece of furniture is the round, three-legged stool (kpā III), Figure 40, carved out of wood and decorated all around its edge with ornamental chip carving.

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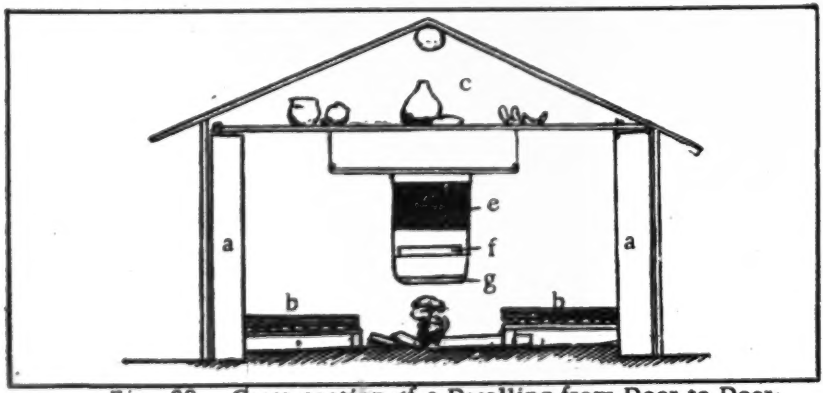
its edge with ornamental chip carving. It is placed on the ground, often in the vicinity of the door posts, and is considered, so to speak, as a place of honor -- for strangers and the paterfamilias -- like our sofa.

As a final household implement the sweeper should be mentioned. 412 356
It appears in various forms, depending on whether it is used in the dwelling, for the benches of the meeting house, for the meeting house floor, or for the village square.

For the house a broom evü ā[k], Figure 41 a, is used, made of raffia leaves tied together in the shape of a fan. "More elegant" brooms are used by the Jaunde for the benches of the meeting houses. These are made of pieces of liana stalks, Ertela scandens Benth., [824] Leguminosae, called ntū (b), or of the flowers of the oil palm (c). The pieces of liana stalk are slit so that they form something like a brush; these brooms therefore correspond more or less to our dusters. A third form of broom (Fig. 42) consists of two little wooden boards tied with strips to a handle. /Fig. 39 appears here in the original text./ /76/ It resembles our snow shovels, but it is by no means to be found in every village, and even where it is found it is infrequently used.

In the preceding descriptions the reader will have been struck 87 by the frequency with which the raffia palm is mentioned as construc- 824 tion material. It is indeed true that this palm, called "bamboo" in Negro English, is by far the most important and most valuable plant



[342 359]

Fig. 39. Cross-section of a Dwelling from Door to Door: a, door posts; b, sleeping benches; c, pot loft; d, loft for drying groundnuts; e, pantry; f and g, roasting boards.

343 dwellings, stand with the gabled side facing the village square and look just like them except that they are firm and durable. 536 Storage houses are to be found only in the villages of wealthier chiefs.

344 The houses for strangers (esă'bă̋d) are built following exactly the same pattern and ground plan as the ordinary dwelling, but they are very hastily constructed: the walls are usually only plaited palm leaves; the door extends to the ground with no threshold; and the sleeping benches are those of the simple kind (kū'dū III), often made only of umbrella tree trunks split lengthwise down the middle and placed on top of two casters of the same wood. They are constructed especially on the occasion of the festival for departed souls when greater numbers of strangers are expected; at the conclusion of the festive period they are pulled down.

342 In the forests or on very isolated plantations, refuge huts are frequently built. These are often no more than mere protective roofs (myō e ngī III = gorilla home), while others resemble the simplest temporary meeting houses, that is, huts in which the gabled sides are open and the long walls are either absent or consist only of a few tree trunks (angō̋n e ngī = gorilla crown, that is, the strip which juts out like a comb on the top of the gorilla's skull). /79/

344 744 Special houses are built next to or behind the dwellings or just outside the village for persons with contagious diseases (frambesia, leprosy) (see Fig. 16). Because they are designed for only one person, they are usually smaller than the dwellings; they have the same shape but are carelessly constructed and soon deteriorate because nobody takes the trouble to repair them.

343 Here and there I found stables; in the next section I shall come back to these. /Fig. 42 appears here in the original text./

342 177 Finally, it should be mentioned that in some villages especially those close to the coast, there are houses on piles. These are copied from the European settlements and are almost completely useless for the natives since their construction requires greater care and trouble than that of ordinary houses. Consequently, the houses on piles built by the Pangwe are veritable caricatures of human dwellings.

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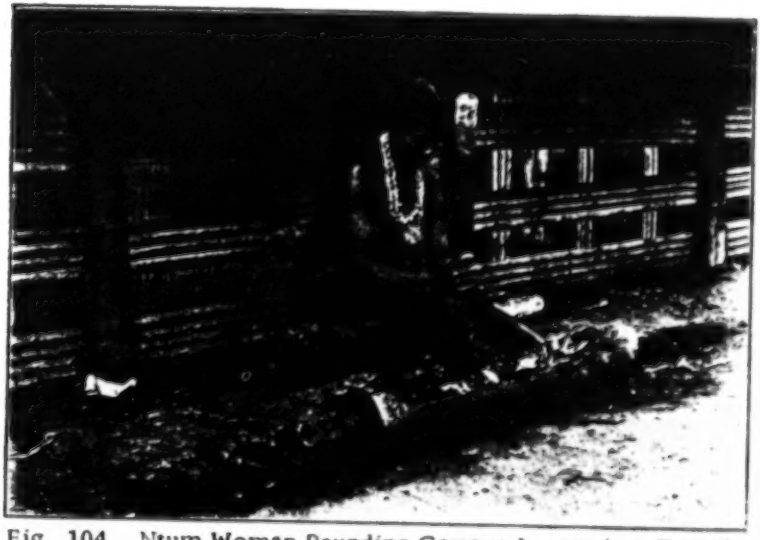

Fig. 104. Ntum Woman Pounding Cassava Leaves in a Trough for Spinach.

252 three or four times, and salt is added. Everything is given another good stirring, and the dish is ready. Sometimes the material is also boiled with a little water in the pot itself.

(b) Groundnut bundle (nnɜ̀m-ewu no I).

As in the case of (a), water is put on the fire in a pot. After the pot has been taken off the fire, the groundnut material is poured into it and stirred up as water is added. Then the mush is put inside a plantain leaf that has been drawn through the fire to make it flexible; the leaf is tied together into a bundle and placed on the fire in a pot of cold water. The pot must be closed at the top with leaves. If the groundnuts are not stirred up with hot water, but, as in this case, are placed on the fire cold, they always have to boil from half an hour to an hour. /159/

(c) Groundnut mush (atō ō).

The mass of groundnuts -- prepared as indicated above -- is poured into a pot of boiling water and stirred around. Then it is

1: Tessmann--157 E-5 (1904-1909) 1913 FH9 Fang FH9

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3. Palm wine.

The Pangwe make palm wine primarily from the oil palm Elaeis guineensis L. (alɛ́n). In very rare cases they make it from the raffia palm, while in the extreme north it is also made from

[272 342]

Fig. 106. A Ntum Man Using a Spiked Stalk to Scrape Sections of Sugarcane in Order to Press Sugar Wine out of it.

the Deleb palm. As a result, its abundance and quality depend upon the range of the oil palm, that is to say, actually only the northern Pangwe region, especially the Mwele, Jaunde, and Bene areas and to a lesser extent the Bulu area, come into consideration here. In the south, on the other hand, the making of palm wine is practically unknown; there oil palms are so sparse that they give their name to nearby localities (Alén, Malén) because they

1: Tessmann--165 E-5 (1904-1909) 1913 FH9 Fang FH9

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Fig. 110. Tobacco Planted in a Village Square.

276 (mȳ̆-taa) consists of a clay bowl and a wooden stem about 30 centimeters long, part of which has brass wire neatly wound around it (Fig. 109). Formerly, this pipe is supposed to have been as long as an arm among the Jaunde.

249 Proportionate to the indifferent habit of smoking is the indifferent care and affection with which the tobacco plant and its leaves are treated. Wherever a great deal of tobacco is imported by the trading houses, tobacco cultivation is completely neglected. /171/

Tobacco seeds are sown in whatever planting area happens to be convenient at the same time as the principal crop of the field is planted. Accordingly, the tobacco may be sown, for instance, with groundnuts twice a year. Frequently a small tobacco bed is laid out close to the village, or the seeds are planted next to the houses and sometimes on the village square (Fig. 110).

As soon as the plants attain a certain height, all the leaves except those on top are picked off. The top leaves are left so that the plant can continue to grow and bring forth blossoms and fruit. Then the leaves are harvested for the second time, and the fruit

3/4 For the house walls the bark plates that have been removed
3/2 are in part used without further ado. That is, they are used either completely raw or after the outermost layer has been peeled off -- the practice of the Jaunde, but the Ntum and Fang do this best with the Xylopia aethiopica (ojâ,h). /206/ Otherwise, the Ntum and Fang prefer to dry the bark pieces for five or more days over the fire in the meeting house or in the sun, for otherwise they quickly warp or develop cracks and holes.

Ornamental barks are treated in the same way and dried especially well because, unlike the house walls, they are not held by boards on both sides. To obtain ornamental bark, all the trees

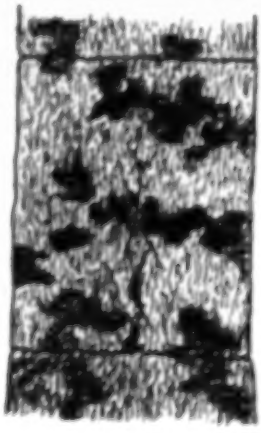

Fig. 157a. Removal of Tree Bark for House Construction.

mentioned in the footnote on page 214 can be used, but Cordia odorata Gürke (ebɛ, Fang) and Triplochiton tessmannii (afɔ́ɔ́) are especially suitable since various layers can be drawn off from their bark after drying, each one of which can be used by itself. This means a saving of labor which is as valuable to the Negro as it is to us. The bark is made into rectangular plates painted
3/4 with figures and scenic representations or patterned in colorful
3/2 rectangular, triangular, or arc-shaped fields. The frames of
5/31 the rectangular fields consist mostly of raffia leafstalk strips running diagonally; those of the arc-shaped fields consist of

314 strips of rattan palm. Both frames are drawn through holes made
342 with an awl (nsŏ́n), Figure 174, c; they are sewn on with fine
91 palm bands. In the next section I shall speak of the patterns.

314 To obtain bark for houses and decoration a whole number of
445 trees are available, as we have seen. On the other hand, containers
322 -- at least in the southern region -- are made from the bark of only a single tree, a Tiliacea (ekǫ́'b). They are carefully worked, and when new they look very nice because of their even yellow-gray color which later, as a result of the smoke in the hut and through age, becomes dark brown to black. They are manufactured in the following manner. The requisite piece of bark is cut off to the desired size, and its outermost layer is scorched over the fire so that it can be scraped off with a knife. It is then bent into the shape of a cylinder so that the edges lie over one another in a narrow strip. The edges are clamped between the halves of a stick that has been split down the middle, the halves being pressed together again at the top and bottom by means of a string. At this point the edges are sewn one on top of the other with two seams. The stitching is done with palm bands, for which holes are made with an awl. The projecting edge is cut off. The lid consists of a hoop similarly constructed from the same bark and a plate made of the wood of the umbrella tree, which is also used for the bottom of the vessel.

445 Bark containers of all sizes are manufactured, from the most
761 charming little boxes to the gigantic barrel. In one respect, however, they are identical, that is, only important things are kept in them, such as the poisoned arrows for the crossbow, skulls of ancestors, and, above all, medicines, in short, all things /207/ connected with death; hence they are called nsǫ́k I (1), since

1. In addition, we find nkǫ́b I from which is derived the name of the tree, ekǫ́b.

n-sŏ-k -- derived from n-so-ak -- contains the root sŏ which designates death in the religious sense. Thus, one puts something associated with death (sŏ) in the bark container (action is involved

285 The second class of baskets displays a variety of braiding elements: one that is flexible and active (braiding strips) (2), forms

2. See the discussion in J. Lehmann, Systematik und geographische Verbreitung der Geflechtsarten /System and Geographic Distribution of Types of Braiding/, Leipzig, 1907.

[113]

the bottom of the basket, and, ascending upward, is tied around the second, stiffer, passive one (braiding strand). /215/ Placed in the form of a spiral, this second element forms the wall of the basket. The sources of the braiding elements are as follows.

285 824 The active elements are taken from Sarcophrynium stalk strips, Pandanus leaves, or -- this is the predominant source -- the outermost wood layer of the rattan palms. The term for these current today is the collective name nlóʼn I, a word derived from the root a lɔ́n "to braid, to twine" (compare a lɔ́n ndǎ, "to weave a house together, to build"; a lɔ́n nkɔ̌ɔ̄ʼ, "to weave baskets"), and used at the same time for the "bush rope" obtained from the rattan palms. Formerly, nlɔ́ʼn designated only the Eremospatha macrocarpa M. et W., which occurs only in the coastal strip west of 11 degrees longitude and in the north or northeast of the Pangwe region. Later, when the Pangwe came south, the term was transferred to the two rattan palms occurring there which are used for the same purpose, namely, Eremospatha tessmannii Becc. (ongǎ́m) and especially Oncocalamus mannii Wendl. (ebɔ̄ʼdɔ̌gɔ̌ Fang, ebɔ̄ʼdɔ̌k Ntum; young, akɔ̌ʼlɔ̄ɻ), Plate 16, Drawing 1, which is important there (1).

342 824 1. The rattan palms mentioned, aside from being used in weaving, are also used in the following ways.
1. In house construction: as rough bands, to tie together the framework of the house; as finer bands, to tie together the lathes of the side walls and the raffia leafstalks of which the sleeping

342 824

benches are made; and -- in the form of very fine bands -- to tie roof mats together.

824

2. In bridge construction, as railing ropes.
3. To wind around worn or bad wooden handles (cutlass and knives) and handles of fly swatters and brooms.
4. As a band, for example, to hold together damaged rifle butts and wooden plates, to tie down the bark stretched over the sounding board of the harp, and so forth.
5. As the main strand for the woman's back apron made of bast; the bast bundles are fastened to it.
6. As string for the musical bow (elĕm).
7. As bird snares.
8. In making bark containers (see above).
9. As decorative strips for arm and neck bands (ekăt).
10. As a stamp to make a pattern on pottery.

285 824 The passive element mainly comes from the rattan palm Ancistrophyllum acutiflorum Becc. (nkāne, more rarely ekă), Plate 16, Drawing 2, which differs from the Oncocalamus mannii in having large spikes on the upper side of the main leaf vein and finer spikes on the center vein and along the sides of the pinnae, a terminal inflorescence, and differently colored fruit (2). As

2. Aside from weaving, this is used in the following ways.
1. Decorative strips for arm and neck bands (ekăt).
2. Walking sticks.
3. Sugar press.
4. Tension ropes for drumheads.

1: Tessmann--337 E-5 (1904-1909) 1913 FH9 Fang FH9

Plate XII

Dwelling in Bebai (Esseng Family) Ntum Region.

2. Tessmann--43 E-5 (1904-1909) 1913 FH9 Fang FH9

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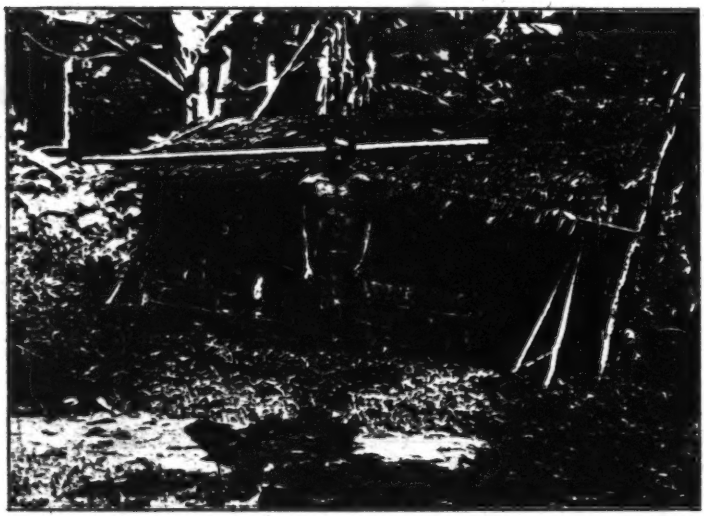

Fig. 63. Leper in front of his Hut, Bébai (Esseng Family), South Cameroons.

Harms (andzĭtsĭn), whole leaves of the Phaulopsis or ground leaves of cassava (Manihot utilissima) and Emilia sagittata L. (alōmvŭ III) are pressed on the spots, and over them is sprinkled a powder made of the dried and charred roots and stems of the Asystasia macrophylla T. And. /173/ (elŏbokŭi). Shortly before the complete healing of the spots, the fruit of Solanum aethiopicum L. var. (ndzē̩i-zŭ̩m) is pressed on them so they will become as black as the fruit.

For the later stage of the illness, in which the festering boils form, the following prescription is used: leaves of the Bidens bipinnatus L. (aniŏ̍ń), leaves of the Brillantaisia vogeliana Bth. ebŭgebŏ̍ń), and pieces of bark of Ficus exasperata are boiled together in water; the water is then poured into a leaf vessel and left to stand until it is lukewarm; then the leprosy spots are washed with it. Thereupon, whole leaves of the Fleurya aestuans (L) Gandich (ngūkŭ̍n IV) are placed on the boils as a compress. After two days, the leaf is taken off, the washing is repeated, and the young, still folded leaves of the Loganiacea Mostuea buchholzii Engl. (ofŭ̩mū) are ground and put on the wounds.

country and in the north of Boulou country) has put a considerable brake upon village nomadism, the planters not liking to move away from their plantations. When there is migration, the activity consists rather in the "swarming off" of a portion of the inhabitants, who go to found a new hamlet in a site favorable for cultivation, without there being from then on any necessary correspondence between family structure and settlement pattern. The new jal will no longer necessarily correspond to one family but may gather together several families from different and unrelated lineages (mvam).

The Pahouin village of former times was planned for defense. Situated in an oblong clearing, usually within reach of the nearest village (3 to 4 kilometers) by drum-telephone (nkul), it comprised two lines of contiguous rectangular huts, gable to gable, on either side of a courtyard or main street (nseñ), blocked at either end by a guardhouse /men's house/ (aba, abeñ) allowing only a narrow entrance, often oblique, which was barricaded every evening. All doors gave onto the nseñ; the outer walls having merely a few loopholes. Sometimes the village was encircled by a moat (ésalak) and traps, sometimes also by a stockade /akak). The most important subsistence plots (mefup) were in the forest, often quite far away, but near the village behind the huts were banana groves and kitchen gardens, while medicinal plants (bilok bi mebiañ) as well as tobacco were grown in the central nseñ. The hut walls were made of bark (particularly of certain kinds of Ficus /fig/) which was wetted, then beaten flat and dried to form boards; these are the "carbotes" (from the English word "cardboard") still in use on the coast. These boards were fastened by lianas and pegs to posts set in a rectangle. The double pitched roof was of "tiles" made of raffia folioles (ôbaé, pl. abaé) folded in two and pinned with wooden splinters to the scantlings made of /42/ strips of the main leaf rib set parallel to the ridgepole. This ridgepole rested on forked posts, of which the two central ones had magical significance and were usually carved or at least painted. The dimensions of these dwelling huts rarely exceeded 6 by 3 meters, while those of the guardhouses (meba) might reach twice this. In each household the man had his private hut where he kept his most valuable possessions (biôm): chests containing loincloths, etc., weapons, drums, "medicaments" (mebiañ), his own seat, masks, and magical equipment. The women's huts, side by side with his and where the young children slept, were used as kitchens and contained carrying

baskets, storage baskets (binaan), crockery (viek), or imported "negro pots" /sic/ (minkeñ), the drying rack, shrimp nets, mortars, and other feminine implements. The young unmarried men slept in the guardhouse; the girls slept with the women. A jal occupied by an average-sized family might be 50 meters long. Large minlam reached half a kilometer, in which case the nseñ was divided into sections by the secondary meba of each family. The chief lived in the middle and had a larger aba than those of other families.

This kind of village has almost entirely disappeared. Bark huts are still extant in a few isolated villages in Gabon, but they are increasingly rare. In actual fact, one finds almost everywhere the hut of reinforced banco /wattle and daub?/ (the wattle consists of laths made of the main ribs of raffia, incorrectly called bamboo), imposed on Boulou country around 1925 by an administrator called Nkulu (meaning "the Tornado"), which has left its mark throughout Pahouin country. These huts are usually rectangular but tend, in prosperous villages, to be influenced by European forms, with T-, U-, or H-shapes, with verandas and lean-to showers. They are often plastered with kaolin (fem) sometimes mixed with red or green ocher or with imported laundry blueing. The roof is still usually of raffia tile, but it may have four slopes or be even more complicated, copied from European roots. Each family has its own privy (éduk).

The layout of villages has likewise changed. The most prevalent plan keeps the single central nseñ /street/, but the huts are in four lines on either side and are separate, no longer contiguous. The men's huts are nearest the road, the women's, now called kisin (cuisines /kitchens/), are laid out behind, or sometimes around, the husband's. The plaster is often painted in fresco with various subjects —copies of pictures in magazines, religious subjects, in Boulou country illustrations from the novel Nnanga kôn (1), portraits of

> 1. The best Boulou painter of recent years was David Monewoso, a Yemfek from Sangmélima, who not only established the iconography of Nnanga kon but is also a good portraitist and a remarkable painter of animals.

Europeans famous locally or internationally. The aba /guardhouse/ has lost its defensive character and often take the form of an airy

shed with a roof low enough to /43/ give good protection from the sun. Some villages are placed at right angles to the road; others follow an L or Y plan, with several minseñ. Family "allotments" are separated by hedges of euphorbia, castor-oil plant, hibiscus, and bougainvillea. Sometimes one comes across sheepfolds, although in old-style (and most contemporary) villages small livestock roam at will. A village often includes a guesthouse (ayak).

In building operations the man generally takes charge of the framework and the laths, leaving to the women the preparation and application of the banco /clay daub?/. But European-style huts with their elaborate door frames and often cement floors are more and more the work of specialized artisans, who are paid to supervise the family labor provided by the owner. These men have nevertheless preserved, along with the English term "mason," the old name nloñ nda, literally, hut-weaver, which goes back to the time when huts were made of sewn bark (1).

1. The dwelling continues to evolve: framed doors, windows, and shutters are in general use today. The dimensions of the buildings lead to the construction of a real frame. Finally, to possess a sheet-iron roof is a sign of wealth. In recent years there has arisen a real passion for the improvement of dwelling: in the Cameroons we may estimate that 10 percent of the dwellings now built in the bush are the most modern type. (J. B.)

2. Groupings and Relationships

The main divisions of Pahouin society are both exactly defined in the minds of its members themselves and at the same time uncertain for the European observer, who is constantly tempted to state them clearly in organic forms accessible to his "logic" and who is hindered by the variations or the dialectal confusions of Pahouin terminology. Father Trilles, basing his observations on the Fang of Gabon alone, reached a sort of palaeontological reconstruction of the "Fang nation," extremely theoretical, yet not without basis

881 304 779 782 do all he can to end this state. As soon as he has killed an enemy, he hurries with the victim's hand to his father. Circumcision then solemnly takes place before all the warriors, and his marriage is celebrated as soon as the wound has healed.

3) Time of the ceremony

881 304 779 The chief first decides upon the date, which is almost invariably in the eight days before a full moon.

As soon as the chief has announced that circumcision will shortly take place, he indicates all the children who are to be included; they, under his direction, go off into the forest not far from the village. After a large space has been cleared, they [342] build open little huts or mere shelters, where they live all together.

Their food is left at the beginning of the path leading to the huts, for no one is supposed to approach; access [523] is above all strictly forbidden to women. The food is plentiful, [264] and nothing must be thrown away or hidden; everything must be eaten, and the chief supervises this rigorously. (1)

1. One of our missionaries observed the same custom among the more advanced populations of the interior. He even mentions this fact: the rule is so strict that one of the candidates was forced three times in succession to swallow the food that his stomach persistently rejected.

4) Preparations

[351] All around the place where the boys are confined, a fence of reeds (1) is erected, which no one dares jump over. This seclusion

1. The place of circumcision shows well enough that the rite is like a consecration, by blood sacrifice, of the sexual life to which the young man is thereafter admitted. Lagrange, op. cit., p. 244.

779 would lead to a ritual offense. These branches are embedded
778 in the earth; they must also be straight, cut from the actual
622 trunk of the tree and not from a branch; upon these poles stuck into the ground, the chief arranges pieces of bamboo (1) which

[342 824]

1. Bamboo is the usual term given by analogy to the palm stems or raffia used in all Fan building, in place of real bamboo, which is unknown or a recent importation into Gabon.

[284] make a platform. They are tied together, not with the lianas usual for huts, but with lashings [538] made of rattan palm. When that work has been done, the chief places his évora biéri on the upper tier; the other family heads put their bivora bibiér to the right and left in order of precedence. When all the boxes of skulls have been lined up, each man, after having danced and sung around the altar, then approaches it again, opens his box, removes the ancestral skulls, and places them on the lower tier below the boxes. Upon his family skulls he places the family totem, then his own personal totem. There is another series of dances, accompanied by songs. The chief then advances again, alone, and puts the skull of his immediate ancestor above all the others, dances and sings, then puts the skull inside that of the first ancestor. He also takes his family totem, which by the very fact of his birth is the tribal or clan totem, and places it upon the two superimposed skulls, his father's and that of the clan father. Then there begins a special
533 song called the Song of Union. The archaic words are nowadays
622 for the most part very hard to understand, the general meaning,
779 on the other hand, is easy to grasp: it deals with the uniting of all the heads of families in direct line and consists of an invocation to the Spirit of the Race, who has passed down through all descendants from the first ancestor so as to produce a united and indivisible whole. The final words of the song express this idea quite clearly:

8: Bennett D.5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

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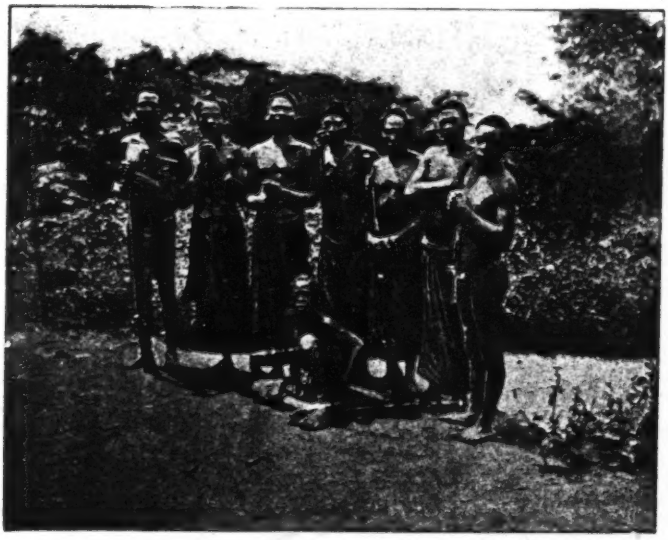
291
516



FANG MEN.

342
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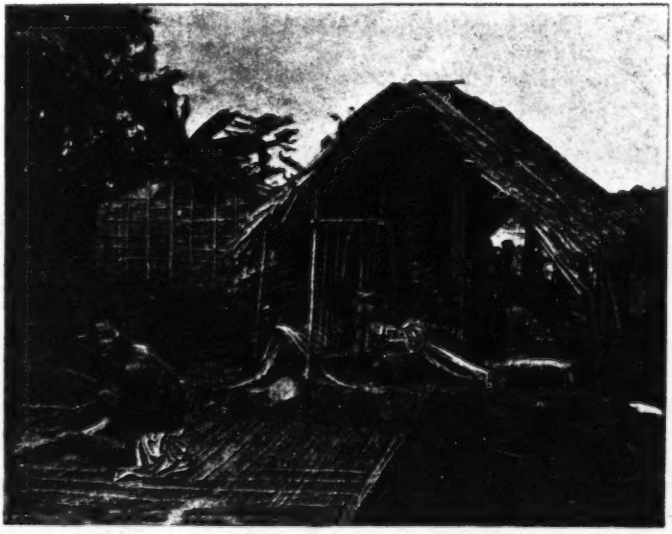
352



FANG HOUSE.

[p.66(B)]

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

342
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482
142

FANG WOMAN.

142
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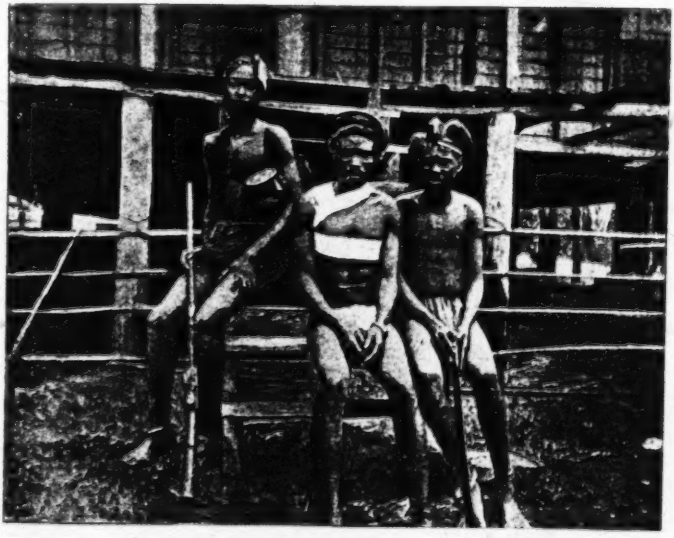

FANG YOUTHS.

[p. 66(C)]

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

to obtain any accounts touching on its introduction, beyond the fact "we learnt it from our fathers." No ceremonies are connected with it. There are no professional tattooers, but the natives frequently employ a man known to be skilful to ornament them. It is practised by both sexes; young lads are anxious to be tattooed because it makes them feel "real men," but the practice is not indispensable as a sign of manhood. The same blue pigment obtained from a tree fungus used in painting is mixed with ashes and employed for tattooing. The instrument used is a sharp piece of bamboo, a piece of sharp iron or a knife. The practice does not appear to be in any way connected with pagan worship. Social or family rank does not affect the designs employed. Fang tattooing is not always symmetrical, it usually commences with the face, and a favourite design on the cheeks somewhat resembles the bowl and stem of a straight pipe. Only one colour is employed. Tattoo marks and designs are mostly found on the face, chest, shoulders, arms and abdomen. Women frequently have the pipe pattern or a band across the cheeks, and occasionally upon the breasts.

Cicatrization is largely practised. Small incisions are made in the skin with a sharp instrument, frequently a steel nail from an imported packing case obtained from the trade house, the nail being flattened out into a small knife blade; or a sharp piece of bamboo is used. The juice of a certain herb is rubbed into the incised wounds.

IV.—*Habitations.*

The houses are built mostly of bark; beams and rafters are made from the strong branches of forest trees and bamboo; they are secured by bush rope. The entire structure rests on the ground. It is very rare to find a Fang house on poles, except near the coast. There is no regularity in size of houses, but the form and material used is common to all the tribe. The average Fang house or hut is a low dark building, 15 feet long by 10 wide, and with walls about 6 feet high; the roof angle increases the height inside. Each family has a house; it is used, day and night, by all members of the family. Travellers usually occupy the *abeng* (palaver house), and the headman finds them sleeping quarters at night. When the owner dies he is usually buried close to the house, and the grave levelled off and soon obliterated. The houses comprising a town are built together, end to end. Towns consist of two rows of houses, with the main road passing between them. The *abeng* (palaver house) is built across one end of the main road. A large place is often composed of several towns or villages in line, the limits of each village being marked by its palaver house, and having its own headman. The Fang method of conveying information regarding the size of a place is by stating the number of palaver houses it contains. Stockades are frequently used at the entrance to a town, especially if the people have a palaver (tribal war) with a neighbouring tribe. The palaver houses and dwellings are also frequently stockaded. The natives often show considerable foresight and shrewdness by making use of the natural advantages of a position in selecting a site for their villages.

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

site for their villages. The houses can be readily taken down and erected elsewhere. The earth floor is often beaten very hard, no covering is used. The beds are made of bamboo poles resting upon end pieces, supported by four forked corner stakes. The bed is raised about one foot from the ground. In most houses are four beds, two at each end on opposite sides, having a log fire burning between, the smoke escaping through the thatch roof. The furniture is all movable, and consists of stools, cassava bowls and boards, drinking gourds, fish nets, water gourds, various baskets and hanging bamboo shelves for drying fish and corn over the fire. Food, guns and powder horns are hung up on wooden hooks suspended by bush rope; these hooks are made by cutting a suitable branch from a young tree, having a strong crutch. No separate portion of the dwelling is set apart for sleeping or eating. There are no windows to a Fang house; at night one or more pieces of bark are used for a door. All the domestic arrangements are excessively filthy. Refuse from meals is unknown, everything is eaten, including entrails and skin of animals and fish. Before occupying a new house the witch doctor (*ngangan*) is usually called to perform the ceremony of propitiating the evil spirits (local spirits), and the *biang Ekuri* (fetish) is hung up and becomes the protecting fetish of the household. This fetish is hung up over the doorway outside. The houses are built entirely above ground, the roofs are made of split bamboo and covered with thatch made from the long tough blade of a swamp reed, or rush. This thatch makes a most excellent roof, and when well put on, it is able to withstand three years of the terrible rains which fall during the long wet season.

V.—*Navigation, Hooks, Nets, Fishing, Traps.*

The Fang use long narrow canoes. A suitable tree having been found is felled and trimmed, then hollowed out with the small native wedge. All the boats are open and both sides of the canoe alike. The women use the same canoes as the men and paddle them very skilfully. War canoes are made large and strong, but are otherwise similar in construction to the canoes in daily use. A kind of lugger sail is used and the natives sail a thin canvas very close to the wind. The baler used is made of wood; it much resembles a large flat sugar scoop and is common among tribes along the west coast. This baler is used most skilfully and with great rapidity by both men and women. In paddling, no fulcrum whatever is used. The men and women either sit or kneel, grasping the paddle handle in its upper and lower thirds they plunge the blade deeply into the water, and force the canoe ahead with great rapidity. One man, woman, or a child steers, using an ordinary paddle; the time kept while paddling is excellent, and is usually kept by one man chanting a Fang song, not unlike a white sailor's shanty, the paddling taking on renewed vigour during the chorus. The sails are usually made now of imported trade cloth, but I have seen them made from the native bark cloth. Only one sail is used and the canoes are able to beat up well against the wind.

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

412 the natural curve of the branches. Stones are employed for rolling food, especially for crushing and rolling the *ngon* seed. Shells of large land mollusca are cut in half and used for spoons, small gourds being used for the same purpose. Large gourds are used for water dippers and bottles. Very many uses are found for the forest 824 gourds, not the least ingenious being the use of a hollow stemmed gourd for [757] administering a rectal injection. Gourds are used for the sounding boards of the musical instrument called *mvuk*. The people find many uses for bamboo. It is used in construction of houses, fish baskets and traps are made from it, fences to protect paths during tribal wars are made of sharp pointed bamboo poles; and small sharpened pieces of bamboo with poisoned tips are buried in the forest paths, point upward, to wound and poison the naked feet of an unsuspecting enemy. The 825 teeth and claws of leopards and bush cats, elephant tail, antelope feet, horns and forest beans are used in their natural form as personal ornaments. Leopard teeth are always considered valuable as *biang* (fetish) and are much sought after; they are frequently imitated in ivory. I have not seen the defences of animals employed [412] as artificial defences, except as fetish. Long tough forest thorns are often used as awls and needles for piercing and sewing skins. I once saw an *ngangan* (witch doctor) 763 perform a post-mortem examination on a woman. After he had discovered the cause 797 of death, which he announced to the expectant crowd as being due to "six witches eating her liver," he first pierced the abdominal walls with a long hard thorn, and then sewed up the body with a bamboo needle threaded with pineapple fibre. I 342 have seen only one cave dwelling; it was used by an isolated sufferer of the dread 734 disease called by the natives *mabata* (a kind of sloughing phagedina). When proper reed material for making thatch is scarce, large forest leaves are used, but they make very poor roofs, especially during the tornado season.

Conservatism.—The Fang are not quick to adopt reforms or to introduce new 185 methods; they are more or less the slaves of custom, and have a superstitious dread 186 of departing from ancestral habits. This refers to all the proceedings of life. Fang living in towns near Gaboon are almost daily coming in contact with white settlers, and to some extent, at least, appear to be changing their mode of living. It never appeared to me that a Fang had the same longing to be "just like a white man" as possesses the young Mpôngwe and Benga men.

IX.—*Ornamentation.*

The patterns mostly seen in Fang ornamentation consist of bands, incised 531 lines, elliptical punch marks, herring bone, lozenge pattern and cross lines. The natives do not possess a natural aptitude for drawing and seldom attempt it. The few drawings I have seen on the bark walls of houses supposed to represent men and women, were very crude and exaggerated in proportion. They have no idea whatever of perspective. They seem to interpret foreign drawings very readily. [322] The Fang show considerable skill in plain wood carving, using an ordinary native knife. I have noticed that their carving improves very considerably when an imported pocket knife is the instrument employed.